

George Kleiner
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April, 07 2021

Honorable Valerie E. Caproni
Judge of the United States District Court
for the Southern District of New York
Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse
40 Foley Square
New York, NY 10007

15-cr-93

The Hon. Judge Caproni,

I'm not sure why I'm writing this letter, I've not been asked to, except I felt compelled to.

A few days ago, we had one of our family zoom meetings. I'm 84, with a wife married for 60 years and three married children, all professionals and eight grandchildren. During the back and forth of "How are you doing"? I realized, not only how much they cared about me, but also how much respect they had for me.

Later, reflecting on how proud I was of them and they of me, and how lucky we are an intact family. I thought of those families who lost some loved family member to COVID, the love and respect that were lost. And Sheldon Silver came to mind.

I live in the same neighborhood, AD/ED, on Grand Street. He played pick-up basketball with kids, including my son, in the 70's. When I ran for School board in District One, I spoke to people in his office. I was once asked to handout palm cards for him. Otherwise, it was a causal relationship. He was generally considered to be a family man and a good guy as far as politicians and politics go.

Silver broke the Public Trust for which he was convicted, and pays the price of incarceration.

Bertrand Russell, in an essay, wrote the "central motive driving human behavior - acquisitiveness, rivalry, vanity, and love of power". These are the sins Silver allowed himself to be drawn to, and act beyond the pale of lawful behavior and now pays the price.

He now sits in prison, perhaps remorseful, perhaps bitter, railing at the 'System' but fearful of Covid-19 and of dying alone in prison. He must be 74 or 75 by now, and the grim reaper is never far away and his shadow grows ever nearer with time.

If you were to send him to home confinement, can you imagine, the pain he would feel looking into his wife's eyes, both knowing he violated their sacred trust.

And if and when his children and/or grandchildren were to visit, can you imagine the painful remorse, the guilt, the self-recrimination he would feel, knowing they could never look up to him, never to be proud of him, and that he cannot attend his grandchildren plays or school graduations.

I assume you know that I'm asking for, compassion and home confinement. He is not a danger to society and he paid a dear price for his crime.

I read that the NY GOP and Gov, Cuomo arguing strongly that he not be pardoned. And I wondered if it was Justice, they sought or revenge – political payback.

I only ask that you consider the price he has already paid and will continue paying long beyond his jail time. For him the pain and remorse would be greater at home than the bars that surround him now.

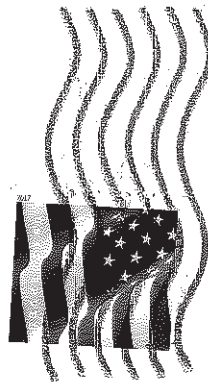
Respectfully yours,

George Kleiner

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